

Item No. 5	Classification: Open	Date: 17.9.03	Meeting Name: Council Assembly
Report title:		QUESTIONS SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE RULE 3.8	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Chief Executive (Borough Solicitor & Secretary)	

COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 3.8 : MEMBERS QUESTION TIME

In accordance with Council Assembly Procedure Rule 3.8 Members' Question Time shall not exceed 45 minutes. During this time, Members may not question any one Executive Member or Committee Chair for longer than fifteen minutes.

Members are limited to one question at each meeting.

Questions shall be taken in the following order; the Leader, the Deputy Leader, the Executive Member for Environment and Transport; the Executive Member for Resources; the Executive Member for Health and Social Care; the Executive Member for Housing; the Executive Member for Regeneration and Economic Development, the Executive Member for Communication & Performance Improvement, the Executive Member for Community Safety, Social Inclusion & Youth; and the Executive Member for Education & Culture;. The order of questions are rotated by the Borough Solicitor & Secretary at every meeting (CAPR 3.8 (9) & (10)).

Executive Members and Committee Chairs have discretion to refer a question to another Executive Member if this is appropriate.

Responses to Members' questions will be circulated on yellow paper around the Council Chamber on the evening of the meeting.

The Mayor will ask the Member asking the question if they wish to ask one supplemental question to the Member to whom the first question was asked. The supplemental question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply. Therefore, questions to the Leader or other Executive Members are not free ranging.

No question shall be asked on a matter concerning a Planning or Licensing application.

(NOTE: In accordance with Council Assembly Procedure Rule 3.8 (9) & (10) (Prioritisation and rotation by the political groups) the order in which questions appear in this report may not necessarily be the order in which they are considered at the meeting).

1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR KIM HUMPHREYS

Would the Leader of the Council confirm that he has noted the report of Professors Jones and Stewart (Local Govt. Chronicle 22/08/03) on the government's "*Balance of Funding*" review papers, in particular their criticism of the government's quoted statement that councils are "*accountable to central government for the delivery of certain services*". Would he agree that the government's statement is correct and, if so, would he specify, in respect of the activities of this Council, the services to which this government doctrine applies, and in respect of each such service, whether it is the Executive or an officer who must account to central government?

2. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR TAYO SITU

Does the Leader not agree with me that the conference to launch the Multi Faith Forum on September the 3rd should be a genuine cross party event?

Could he please inform this council then why only Simon Hughes MP and not Harriet Harman MP or Tessa Jowell MP have been invited to speak at the conference?

3. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID HUBBER

Following on from the decision by Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell MP to pass responsibility for licensing to local authorities, can he confirm that financial compensation is being given to Southwark for this extra responsibility?

4. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR VERONICA WARD

In the light of varying attendances between meetings of Community Councils. Could the Deputy Leader inform us of the expenditure so far per Community Council in relation to advertising each meeting?

5. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LAUDER

Can the Deputy Leader of the Council explain why none of the Faraday Ward Members were either invited to attend - nor even informed about -the meeting held to discuss East Street market held on Tuesday 5th August at 6pm in room A8 at the Town Hall, at which representatives from the East Street Market traders were present, as well as Liberal Democrat Members Councillor Linda Manchester and Councillor Cathy Bowman, officers from the Environment department and market inspectors?

6. QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR AUBYN GRAHAM

Does the Executive Member agree with me that recent Sport Lottery Funding secured to improve sports facilities in Mellish Field/St Pauls Sports Ground and Burgess Park will make a significant contribution to the promotion of sport in Southwark and the participation of young people. Can he also inform Council of the progress being made to complete the improvement works and of his satisfaction of the works completed.

7. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR STEPHEN FLANNERY

Could the Executive Member update me on any action that the Council has taken in respect of the 24-hour bus route on Jamaica Road?

8. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR BARRIE HARGROVE

Could the Executive Member for Environment & Transport share with us any plans that he might have to improve travel options for the Camberwell area?

9. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR TONY RITCHIE

Could the Executive Member please tell Council Assembly why so little preparation was made by the Environment Department to cope with the recent strike by the refuse collectors? For example giving residents of the borough advance warning that there was a strike coming in order that they were able to clear most of the rubbish away beforehand.

10. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR ALUN HAYES

What progress has been made towards completing the sale of land at Queens Road Station to Network Rail and when do you expect the improvement works to commence?

11. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR ROBERT SMEATH

Could the Executive Member please inform Council Assembly as to when the work for a replacement public toilet in the Peckham town Centre will start?

12. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR VICKY NAISH

Can the Executive Member for Environment please explain why such little effort had been made to contact relatives of residents buried in Southwark cemeteries regarding warning notices placed over head stones?

13. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR JOHN FRIARY

Why did the 'permit holders only' signs disappear from the residential parking spaces in Horselydown Lane early this year and why despite repeated residents enquiries to the Ward Councillors had they not been replaced by the beginning of September 2003 ?

14. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID BRADBURY

What progress is being made in getting replacement ornamental ironwork fitted to the west elevation of Turney Road railway bridge to complete the restoration project?

15. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR WILLIAM ROWE

When will the "Blue Box" re-cycling service be extended to collect items other than paper – and what other types of item will be collected by this service?

16. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT FROM COUNCILLOR DERMOT McINERNEY

Will the Executive Member outline the results of the green waste recycling pilot and publicly commit to its permanent extension?

17. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR MICHELLE PEARCE

In her response to Councillor Robinson's question relating to costs of the LGA conference the Executive Member for resources stated 'as a result of this effort (attending the LGA conference and having a stand on liveability) the council has increased its profile on the national stage'.

Can Councillor Zuleta inform Council Assembly on what basis has she reached this conclusion, and what form of public relations evaluation has she undertaken to prove it?

18. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR TOBY ECKERSLEY

In the light of (1) the seriousness of the actuarial deficit in the Council's pension fund set out in the client briefing by Mr T N Lunn dated 17th June 2003 and addressed to the Chief Financial Officer, (2) the likely severe burden to fall upon local taxpayers and (3) recent agreements by employees of certain companies in the private sector to accept increased employee contribution rates, would the Executive Member set out fully:

- (a) what are the obstacles to this Council and/or local authorities generally (i) increasing employee contribution rates so as to spread fairly the burden of maintaining the current generous provisions of the Council's defined benefits pension scheme, and/or (ii) reducing such benefits;
- (b) if the obstacles arise from statutory or other legally enforceable provisions, what is the Council's policy towards seeking relaxation or modification of those provisions, and in that context what efforts has the Council, through its Executive or officers, made to achieve such change?

19. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH FROM COUNCILLOR DORA DIXON-FYLE

Will the Executive Member please inform me how many nursing and residential homes and how many voluntary groups supported by social services she has visited?

20. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR ANNE YATES

The Executive Member reported at the last Assembly meeting that the Council would be responding to the Government consultation paper on housing benefit sanctions.

Could the Executive Member please summarise the Council's response?

21. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR LINDA MANCHESTER

Could the Executive Member confirm when Introductory Tenancies will be introduced and whether the actual agreement has been agreed yet?

22. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR GAVIN O'BRIEN

Could the Executive Member comment on the latest Audit Commission inspection of the Housing Department?

23. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR JEFF HOOK

Is the Executive Member aware of the report on stock transfer by the Public Accounts Committee that says that if councils were allowed to borrow and improve council stock themselves then there would be a saving to the public purse of £1,300 per home? Could she please comment on this report?

24. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR MARK GLOVER

Does the Executive Member for Housing agree with the decision of the Tenant Fund Management Committee on 15th May 2003 not to fund the Atwell and Glebe Estate tenant groups?

25. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR ALFRED BANYA

Could the Executive Member for Housing clarify whether Housing Revenue Account funds may be used to pay Neighbourhood Community Development Officers, and if so provide a breakdown by Housing Neighbourhood Office of the number of officers being paid out these funds, their salaries, their employment status (eg permanent staff or agency) and the turnover of staff in each neighbourhood since May 2002?

26. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR FIONA COLLEY

What are the Executive Member's views on the Council's proposals to make "the congregating of people (ie more than 3)" a breach of the tenancy agreement?

27. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR IAN WINGFIELD

When will residents in the Pelican Neighbourhood Housing area know if their housing office will shut?

28. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR CHARLIE SMITH

Could the Executive Member for Housing please give
(a) the average service charge level for leaseholders for 2002/03
(b) the average service charge level for leaseholders for 2003/04
(c) the percentage increase in service charge level between 2002/03 and 2003/04
for the whole borough and for each neighbourhood housing area?

29. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR ALISON MOISE

Could the Executive Member for Housing please outline the extent of the recent reductions in cleaning staff per neighbourhood housing area, the numbers of bulk refuse vehicles per neighbourhood housing area and any other reductions in service?

30. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR ANDY SIMMONS

What is the length of the waiting list for garages on the Clifton Estate and what is the process by which garages are allocated to tenants and leaseholders resident on the estate? Is the Executive Member happy that the correct policy has been followed for all tenants and leaseholders who have requested a garage?

31. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING FROM COUNCILLOR LEWIS ROBINSON

Would the Executive Member please state the aggregate amount by which the purchase price of dwellings bought under the Right to Buy in the last three financial years has been reduced by virtue of applicants availing themselves of the statutory provisions for such reductions (equivalent to rent paid during the period of delay) in the event of delays on the part of the Council, and would she explain how such amounts have been treated in accounting terms?

32. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL BATES

Councillor Bowman stated recently when explaining the Liberal Democrat Executive's decision to appoint Barratt as the master developer for the Downtown redevelopment, that their proposal '...addressed the needs of the local community.' Can the Executive Member for Regeneration set out in full on what grounds the Barratt proposal was chosen over that of Ampurius, and how exactly Barratt's proposal meets the needs of local people?

33. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FROM COUNCILLOR MARK PURSEY

Could the Executive Member comment on the Council's recent success at the London Tourism awards?

34. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FROM COUNCILLOR SARAH WELFARE

It is regrettable that Southwark heritage and the tourist information centre had to close its doors to the public. This is a significant loss of the tourist information centre, which is critical in the promotion, and success of the council regeneration strategy in the implementation of a vibrant tourist industry in Southwark.

Could the Executive Member tell Council Assembly what effect the loss of these valuable services will have on the local economy and what plans the council has to assist local tourism in the future.

35. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FROM COUNCILLOR PETER JOHN

What steps will the Executive Member be taking to ensure a viable future for current small businesses at the Elephant & Castle Regeneration project?

36. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR REGENERATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FROM COUNCILLOR BILLY KAYADA

Could the Executive Member please comment on the current state of Peckham Flaxyard?

37. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY, SOCIAL INCLUSION AND YOUTH FROM COUNCILLOR GRAHAM NEALE

Will the Executive Member join me in welcoming the news that work is about to begin on the Millwall walkway?

38. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & CULTURE FROM COUNCILLOR LISA RAJAN

Can the Executive Member please give his comment on Southwark's GCSE results for this year?

39. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & CULTURE FROM COUNCILLOR NORMA GIBBES

Could the Executive Member for Education please comment on the report in the South London press of 15th August 2003 entitled "Law lords criticise Council over girl" and indicate how many similar cases there are?

40. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & CULTURE FROM COUNCILLOR ABDUL MOHAMED

What targets would the Executive Member for Education like to be set for SATs and GCSEs for next year ?

41. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & CULTURE FROM COUNCILLOR DOMINIC THORNCROFT

When will the feasibility study on a new school for the East Dulwich and Nunhead area be complete?

42. QUESTION TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & CULTURE FROM COUNCILLOR KENNY MIZZI

Would the Executive Member for Education agree there are shortcomings in the traditional methods of assessing adequacy of primary school provision (which are used in the current reports to the Executive and the School Organisation Committee), in as much as those methods are insufficiently sensitive, for example in respect of the size of, and location of schools within, the Dulwich area and in respect of the dynamics of parental attitudes and needs; and if he so agrees, would the Executive Member state what changes he proposes?

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Background Papers
Members Questions

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